

MAY 93

THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART
ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Please complete and return the following questionnaire for our reference file on May Show artists.

FULL NAME: *Thomas E. Shurr*

PRESENT POSITION

N/A

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: *01-29-50 Long Island, New York*

CATEGORY/PRIMARY MEDIA: *3D Jewelry/metals/sculpture*

ART TRAINING (Schools, Scholarships, etc.):

MASTER of Fine Arts: Jewelry/metals
Bowling Green State University 1993

EXHIBITIONS IN WHICH YOUR WORK HAS BEEN SHOWN (include location and year):

See Attached Sheets

COLLECTIONS THAT NOW INCLUDE YOUR WORK:

See Attached Sheets

AWARDS: *Published works: Jewelry/metalwork #2 Survey*
Edited by David and Shereen LaPlante
1992

We would appreciate having a statement about your philosophy and work as an artist—either general or something specific about the piece(s) selected for this year's May Show to aid us in the preparation of gallery talks and in the release of publicity materials. For more space, use the back of this sheet.

See Attached Sheets

MAY 1993

Thomas E. Shurr

Collections:

Marsha Miro, Art Critic, Detroit Free Press
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

Exhibitions:

1992

Steeping Matters: The Metal Tea Infuser
Swidler Gallery
Royal Oak, Michigan (I)

16th Annual Juried Art Exhibition
Proscenium 92, October
The Beck Center for the Cultural Arts
Lakewood, Ohio (C)

Ohio State Fair Art Exhibition
Columbus, Ohio (C)

The 36th Annual June Art Exhibition
Wassenburg Art Center
Van Wert, Ohio (C)

The 32nd Annual Mid-States Crafts Exhibition
Evansville Museum of Arts & Sciences
Evansville, Indiana (C)

Graduate Exhibition
Bowling Green State University
Bowling Green, Ohio (C)
Honorable Mention

1991

Mid-American Conference Jewelry, Metalsmithing
& Sculpture Exhibition
Bowling Green State University
Bowling Green, Ohio (C)

Graduate Exhibition
Bowling Green State University
Bowling Green, Ohio (C)

1990

Mid-American Conference Jewelry, Metalsmithing
& Sculpture Exhibition
Eastern Michigan University
Ypsilanti, Michigan (C)

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Artist Statement

"All things are connected, we are part of the circle of life."

attributed to Chief Seattle

My body of work reflects the idea of things connected and that we are part of the circle of life. We all share in the circle as it begins with birth and ends with death. Nature is constant in showing this process. The most obvious is the changing of the seasons which directly effects the growing process. Leaves die and become the material for new growth. My work represents a similar process; the seed of an idea, nurtured by a design, cultivated by a construction, gathered as a completed work, from beginning to end... a circle. The process of finding is at a subconscious level. I am drawn to objects that are usually passed by or rarely noticed. A rusted wire fence, or the skeletal remains of an animal are objects which may appear as common or uninteresting. To me they appear as quiet yet powerful objects, rich and strong, echoing the process of nature. The material used in the pieces are natural, found objects collected as a result of observing and participating with my environment. Much of my inspiration comes from nature and the outdoors. Stones, bones and shells are 'Nature's sculpture' as Henry Moore described them. Native American and primitive art also play an important influence in my work.

The development of content and concept in the work originates from my encounter with found objects. Each work represents a portion of my life experience. The imagery and symbols draw upon Native American references, mythology, and autobiographical references.

The exploration of techniques and materials have allowed me to combine these elements of inspiration to create, for me interesting and exciting work. Fabrication, soldering, casting and manipulation of materials have given me a much greater breadth of artistic possibilities. Although many of the technical skills are common tools of the craftsman it is the combining of various elements and materials in a particular way that reflect my aesthetic.

The most important aspects I have experienced in creating art work have been self examination and self expression. I strongly believe that sensitivity to my surroundings, manipulation and handling of materials coupled with creativity will contribute to my growth as an artist.

Thomas E. Shum